

Minutes of the Full Governing Board meeting held on Wednesday 6 October 2021



Present:

David Meakin- Chair
Phillip Turner
Guy Thomas
David Brown
Gareth Jones
Oscar Whittaker
Karen Buchanan
Gillian Bardin
Luke Gott
Jim Sutcliffe
Gerald Griggs
Fiona Lugiano
Paul Henderson
Kate Quinn

In Attendance:

Sarah Crossley
Simon Jordan
Simone Lomas
Stuart Arnfield
Neil Burrows
Tracey Kennedy
Charlotte Ashworth

Apologies for Absence:

Paul Ragnall
Richard Robinson
Richard Thorley

- 1 David Meakin welcomed Governors to the meeting, introducing Gareth Jones and Luke Gott who are the new Staff Governors. He also congratulated Oscar Whittaker on his success in being appointed to the National Student Governor Steering Group following a competitive recruitment process.
- 2 David announced that starting with the Accommodation Working Group on the 12 October 2021, all future Committee meetings would be taking place on a physical basis in the building. The Boardroom will be opened up to allow for social distancing and individualised refreshments will be provided. If Governors have concerns with the arrangements, they should speak to the Clerk. In exceptional circumstances, and to support Governors who are not able to attend, a hybrid approach can be practiced. Both Karen Buchanan and Simon Jordan explained how much support Governors gave the Senior Management team prior to and after meetings when conversations took place, a spontaneous practice that had been missed over the last 18 months.

- 3 Tracey Kennedy, Safeguarding and Prevent Manager, introduced Charlotte Ashworth, Safeguarding and Emotional Wellbeing Officer, to the meeting. Charlotte presented a training session to Governors, updating them of the changes to the Safeguarding legislation, the impact of these changes and how the College has responded. Governors were sent a link to safeguarding training for them to complete after the session.
- 4 David Brown asked for clarification in terms of the definition of 'incelibate extremism'. Charlotte explained how people define themselves as incel for example if they are not able to have a sex life despite the fact that they want to be in a relationship.
- 5 Oscar Whittaker was pleased to hear the increase number of Mental Health First Aiders, he is aware of how effective they are.
- 6 David Meakin thanked Tracey and Charlotte, the training gave Governors reassurance of the control and rigour the Safeguarding team upheld in the College, ensuring that students felt and are safe in the environment.

Declaration of Interest

- 7 There were no declarations of interest noted.

Draft Minutes of the Board meeting held on 30 June 2021

- 8 The minutes of the Board meeting of 30 June were accepted as an accurate record, proposed by David Brown and seconded by Fiona Lugiano.

Draft Minutes of the Accommodation Working Group held on 13 July 2021, 10 August 2021 and 14 September 2021.

- 9 David Meakin advised Governors that the working group had recently had a site visit with the Project managers and John Turners who are building the new Sports facility and teaching block. Governors are keen for the building to be delivered on time and within budget, they were given assurances from John Turners that they would do everything they could to bring the project in on time and within the budget already determined.

Matters arising from the minutes on 30 June 2021

- 10 Paragraph 8 – Simone Lomas confirmed that new Governors would be given an awareness of the Safeguarding and Protecting Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults agenda at their induction.
- 11 Paragraph 9 – Simon Jordan confirmed that Safeguarding updates had been included in the Corporate Performance report.
- 12 Paragraph 43– Simon Jordan explained how the issue of 'value for money' and sustainability will be reported on in more detail under goal 8 in the Corporate Performance Report.
- 13 Paragraph 45 – Simon Jordan explained that the Strategic Goals have remained the same in number and 'keeping people safe' is a key part of goal 7.

- 14 Paragraph 46 (i) – Simone Lomas confirmed that the redacted minutes had been published on the website.
- 15 Paragraph 57 – Simone Lomas confirmed that the Curriculum Strategy will be sent to all new Governors prior to their induction with the Senior Managers.

Academic Results 2020/21

- 16 Sarah Crossley introduced the paper, explaining how the process in relation to results for learners changed again this year from Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) to Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs); that all the deadlines had been met, after a College wide effort to collate, validate and check the results before being entered and uploaded to the Awarding bodies.
- 17 This year the awarding bodies sampled a random selection of student work. As a consequence of the robust TAG process all grades were upheld with no changes made by any of the Awarding Bodies. The Government have announced that National Achievement Rate Tables will not be published again for 2020/21.
- 18 The key issue going forward is the additional support each learner will require, not only in their studies but with the pastoral and enrichment activities that the College ensures is available to each learner, using a wrap-around and individualised approach.
- 19 Gerald Griggs asked about some University results, which were low. Sarah confirmed that there were results still outstanding due to disruptions during the year and re-assessments taking place. The final outcome will be presented to Governors at the Governors Strategic Residential. Gerald welcomed the wrap-around support being given to learners.
- 20 Simon explained that the College is conducting Maths and English GCSE re-sit exams in November 2021. These will be the first exams some of the learners have taken in over two years and enhanced support is being offered.
- 21 David Brown was keen to understand the justification for the £1million exam cost that had been incurred without any exams actually taking place. Sarah explained how Awarding Bodies justified their costs; the processes required a significantly higher level of quality assurance attributed to each grade, although last year the College received a 23% rebate, this year there has been no communication that any subsidy will be received.
- 22 Governors noted the update.

Self- Assessment of the Governing Board, its Sub Committees and work and Governor Attendance during 2020/21

- 23 Simone Lomas introduced the report which provided analysis on the feedback received from Governors on their work at Board and Committee meetings during 2020/21. The Governing Board and the Curriculum and Standards Committee have recorded improvements, with the HR Committee remaining the same at 100%. Whilst still high, the Audit, Finance, Remuneration and Search and Governance Committees have recorded a reduction in the percentage score, there were no specific reasons that can be attributed to these results. Further investigation to understand the lower scores will take place along with the implementation of any actions.
- 24 Simone advised Governors of an update to the new Code of Good Governance in relation to reviewing Governance performance; that the Board must conduct an annual governance self-assessment and at intervals of no more than three years, commission an external review by using a suitable external facilitator to evaluate the board's performance.
- Action: Simone Lomas**
- 25 The attendance profile of Governors individually and collectively was outlined. Our performance indicates Burnley College to be in a positive position with 89% overall attendance for the year. Governors were thanked for their contributions and continued support during the year.
- 26 Simone advised that Governor meetings would once again be conducted on a physical basis in the College, where this proved difficult Governors would be offered an alternative practice.
- 27 Governors noted the report.

Corporate Performance 2021 and 2022

- 28 Karen Buchanan introduced the report to members, she went through each of the targets detailed in the report. Governors were invited to raise questions on any item within the report.
- 29 Stuart Arnfield explained the additions made to Goal 8; the Environmental Sustainability aspect of the goal, focussing on our suggestion to report on carbon emissions on an annual basis. In 2019/20 2.26 tonnes of co2 emissions per staff member was reported, this figure will form part of the targets for improvement.
- 30 Gerald Griggs asked about the figure detailed in table 4 for both retention and achievement for the Business line of university results. Karen explained that the figure included a course with only two students enrolled on it with one of them withdrawing half-way through, they were both taught alongside a group of students on a Bucks New course, the results for this course remain outstanding.

- 31 Governors were please and reassured with the rigour and detail being presented in the report.

Governors' Strategic Planning Event Overview Document

- 32 Karen Buchanan introduced the paper and invited Governors to raise questions and comment on the set paragraphs which had been highlighted with the relevant senior managers' name. In the first instance Karen updated Governors of a past action with this document; it had been requested that old items for example the merger with Accrington and Rossendale College and the closure of Hameldon School be removed from the paper. Karen had included them for the purpose of context for Governors to refer to during an Ofsted inspection.
- 33 David Meakin was keen to understand the view of the Senior Managers in relation to the attendance and effectiveness of the Burnley Bondholders. Simon explained that the pandemic had affected the attendance but felt that there was still a need for an influential forum for businesses in the town. The College will continue to support Burnley Bondholders although the forum does require re-invigorating.
- 34 Gerald Griggs wished to note that University College Football Burnley should read University Campus of Football Business in paragraph 2.19.
- 35 David Brown expressed his delight in paragraph 2.44, that the cladding on the UCLan building has been assessed and that the ESFA have confirmed that they are satisfied with the buildings condition and of the outcome of the fire engineer reports.
- 36 Karen updated the meeting on the new eSports qualification that had been included in the curriculum, it had been an initiative generated by the Curriculum Manager in the Division of Computing and Creative Industries, Ed Foulds, who had convinced the SMT of the high level of interest received. A visit from Alan Pace, Chief Executive of Burnley Football Club, had been a resounding success with a commitment to partner and sponsor the College with the eSport curriculum and their apprenticeship levy and after a tour of Fitness Evolution to build a strong relationship with a request to use the current and new facilities.
- 37 Governors noted the updates.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Update

- 38 Neil Burrows presented the report explaining the processes the College undertakes each year to ensure the College is prepared and ready to operate for the academic year ahead. He noted that the College had not been successful in appointing a Health and Safety Manager after numerous attempts to advertise and recruit to the position. The SMT are drafting plans to restructure the way of working in relation to the operational activities required. Assurance was given to Governors that Health and Safety in the College continues to be managed effectively and remains a high priority.

- 39 Neil updated Governors of the current practices being implemented in College in relation to the pandemic; all students and visitors are encouraged to wear face coverings when moving around the premises, in corridors and communal areas and in classrooms and workshops where social distancing cannot be maintained. The College has been contracting with David Shorrock an external ex-HSE inspector to validate/advise on our practices. David visited the College recently and remains extremely pleased with the way of working and the interventions the College has made in terms of keeping staff and students safe. He quoted that “the College continues to go beyond the requirements of the current Covid guidance”.
- 40 David Meakin was pleased to see that the mobile vaccination unit had been on the courtyard for staff and students to use and was reassured by David Shorrock’s view of the practices.

Instruments and Articles and Code of Good Governance

- 41 Simone Lomas introduced the report, giving context to the detail being presented. It is good practice to review the Instrument and Articles on a regular basis, Simone advised that Governors would be requested to undertake this annually at this meeting each year.
- 42 The Code of Good Governance is a document that is intended to assist Governing Boards by underpinning the Instruments and Articles, it has recently been reviewed with the approved version being released on 1 October 2021. The Code has not been changed significantly, it is likely to be reviewed again upon release of the reforms from the White Paper. The key points of note are the inclusion of Environmental Sustainability as a Principal responsibility and the instruction to review/assess Boards by an external body.
- 43 The current position in relation to the Term of Office of individual Governors was explained along with the model of how board membership is reviewed before Governor re-appointment and that although there are six Governors who have been on the Governing Board for longer than two terms of office the Board were able to justify why and continue to work within the spirit of the Codes intention.
- 44 Philip Turner asked whether there was a compliance issue with the Code of Good Governance. Simone quoted the code in terms of the “comply or explain” convention in respect of “must” actions referred to in the Code. “Musts” are activities which are obligatory under statute or regarded as essential for good college governance. Activities which are described as “should” are recommended as a matter of good or enhanced governance practice but is recognised that not all may be appropriate in any particular case. The Code in relation to the Term of Office of Governors is a “should” convention.
- 45 Gerald Griggs was satisfied that the Board was acting in good faith and along with David Brown was reassured that the model was effective and robust.

- 46 Jim Sutcliffe and Kate Quinn were keen to investigate further the inclusivity objective of the Board to reflect and be representative of the local community. A paper to discuss the outcomes from Governor reviews will be presented at the Search and Governance Committee on 13 October 2021.
- 47 Governors unanimously approved the Instruments and Articles of Governance and the process of reviewing Board membership subject to the inclusion of a statement noting that the HE Lead Governor would not exceed two Terms of Office proposed by Jim Sutcliffe and seconded by David Brown.

Strategic Objectives and Goals for 2021-2024

- 48 Simon Jordan referred to the paper presented at the Governing Board in June 2021 where he had proposed to review Goal 8 with a view to changing it to include the increased sustainability activity the College is undertaking. Discussions at that meeting resulted in suggestions to either include an additional Goal or that there should be no changes to the Goals but clearer performance indicators reported in the Corporate Performance Report.
- 49 The SMT propose that they should provide the Governing Board with a more thorough update against Goal 8 through the Corporate Performance Report which is presented at every meeting, it will include updates on progress against the College's sustainability aims such as energy usage reduction, decarbonisation, sustainable procurement and the reduced use of plastics. Additionally, 'value for money' will be made more visible within the report.
- 50 Governors unanimously approved the updated approach to appraising the Governing Board on progress made against the College Strategic Objectives and Goals, noted the recent College awards and confirmed the Strategic Objectives and Goals for 2021- 2024, proposed by David Brown and seconded by Fiona Lugiano.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

- 51 Simon Jordan introduced the report and explained that as a result of staffing changes in the Senior Management Team the role of Strategic Designated Safeguarding Lead is being undertaken by the Deputy Principal. There have also been significant changes to the Keeping Children Safe in Education legislation that were enacted into law in September 2021 and these are reflected in the updated policy. Going forward to ensure Governors are quickly updated with legislative changes which tend to happen over the summer period, this policy will continue to be presented at the September Board meeting rather than the June meeting it has historically been presented at.
- 52 Governors unanimously approved the updated Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the approach of the Governing Board effectively discharging its safeguarding duties, proposed by Kate Quinn and seconded by Jim Sutcliffe.

Governors' Strategic Residential 2021/22

53 Simone Lomas reminded Governors of the Strategic Residential event provisionally booked for the 21 and 22 January 2022 at the Coniston Hotel, Coniston Cold, Gargrave.

54 The paper included a proposed itinerary.

55 Further information will be provided and requested nearer the time.

Minutes of the Remuneration Committee held on 16 August and 18 August 2021 (staff, students and senior post-holders not present)

56 The minutes were reviewed by all governors and unanimously approved.

Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Remuneration Committee held on 5 August 2021 (staff, students and senior postholder not present)

57 David Brown updated Governors of the purpose of the Extra Ordinary meeting; of the pension allowance issues and the pension regulations that impose limits on the amount of benefit that anyone can have when paying into a pension. As a result, the College have drafted a Pensions Tax Policy which was considered and approved for implementation.

Approved by Chair, David Meakin

Signed: D Meakin

Date: 18 October 2021

NOTE: Final approval of the minutes will be at the following Board meeting.